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ABSTRACT

This booklet describes the offerings of the Noordelijke Hogeschool Leeuwarden, a large institute of higher education (a polytechnic) in the north of The Netherlands. Special emphasis is placed on the social studies teacher training programs and the social studies general and applied programs. Blending the definition of the social studies of the National Council for the Social Studies with the Dutch tradition and educational mission of the College of Education, a unique perspective of the social studies is created for the student. "Learning How To Earn" forms the core concept of the design of the social studies curriculum with special emphasis on professionalism, society, and the future. (EH)

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HBO Social Studies

Learning how to learn in Social Studies

An impression of the Social Studies program of the Noordelijke Hogeschool Leeuwarden (NHL) in the Netherlands.

NOORDELIJKE HOGESCHOOL LEEUWARDEN

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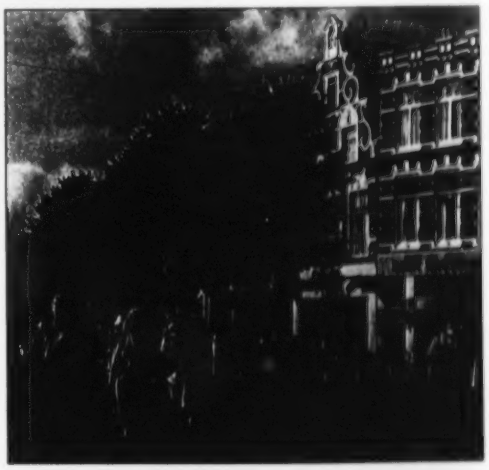
The NHL Social Studies Department is a member of the United States Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) and its International Assembly.

The NHL College: Noordelijke Hogeschool Leeuwarden

The Noordelijke Hogeschool Leeuwarden is a large institute of higher education (a polytechnic) in the north of the Netherlands. Its main location is Leeuwarden, a city rich in history and the capital of the province of Friesland.

Founded more than 700 years ago, Leeuwarden today is a dynamic center for agriculture, agrotechnology, banking and the insurance business. With its attractive old canals, its beautiful 17th century center with monumental houses, pubs and terraces, it has a lot to offer. Friesland's special flavour is found in its cultural heritage and is most manifest in the Frisian language, spoken as a first or second language (next to Dutch) by about half of the population of the province of Friesland. The NHL reaches much further than Leeuwarden alone, as teaching locations include the cities of Drachten, Groningen en Zwolle. NHL's most 'isolated' site is on the island of Terschelling in the Wadden Sea (the wetlands), where you will find our school of maritime engineering.



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The NHL offers a versatile curriculum

At the NHL students can choose from a wide range of study programs in a variety of fields. Some 9,000 students and 900 staff are involved in more than 70 subject areas, ranging from language to technology, from nursing to public administration, from management to manual arts.

The departments are situated in modern buildings with good facilities. The Noordelijke Hogeschool offers programs at undergraduate, graduate and post-graduate level, both for full-time and part-time students.

The NHL is a so called 'HBO institute'. HBO stands for the Dutch term 'hoger beroeps-onderwijs' i.e. higher professional education. 'HBO' distinguishes itself from university education in that it combines theoretical instruction at a high academic level with the development of skills required for practical application in a particular profession. Compulsory placement in schools, industry and non-profit organizations are an essential part of the curriculum. The Dutch HBO is very flexible and has its curricula geared to market needs, contributing to innovation in every field.

The average HBO program takes four years of full-time study or six years of part-time study to complete. Graduates of HBO-programs are entitled to use the international title 'Bachelor'. Following the bachelor programs the NHL offers a limited number of programs at the graduate school level.

The Social Studies Department

The College of Education of the NHL originally was a Teacher Training College, training students in a wide range of subject areas.

More than twenty different study programs are on offer, concentrated in several departments. There is the Language Department, the Science Department, the Visual Arts Department and the Department of Social Studies.

The College of Education offers two types of study programs. Apart from teacher training programs for almost all subjects in primary and secondary schools, the College offers several other programs, more or less in line with the U.S. Liberal Arts tradition. In this so called two track policy, one track is leading to a teaching qualification in a particular field of study. The second track is also strongly connected with the educational mission of the College of Education but aims at professions outside education as such.

Because of the growing need in society for people with communicative skills, who not only have a thorough command of a given subject but can also transfer this knowledge to others, the College offers this second track with training programs for public information and management positions in business, trade and the non-profit sector (for example jobs in Public Relations, journalism, advertising and so on). The Social Studies department is one of the major departments of the NHL College of Education. At the moment some 900 students are enrolled in the department and about 60 staff members are working there. Related to the two track policy mentioned above the studies of the department can be grouped in two branches.

A. Social Studies Teacher Training Programs.

Possibilities: Business and General Economics, Geography, Health Care, History, Home Economics, Sociology/Political Science and last but not least Theology.

B. Social Studies General and Applied Programs.

Possibilities: Social Studies (as an integrated field of study in the liberal arts tradition), Applied Geography, History and Media, In-service Business Training and Educational Technology, Consumer Relations, Public Relations and Communication, Theology and Pedagogics.

A special feature of Dutch higher education should be mentioned here. Unlike most universities the departments of the College of Education combine the theoretical study of certain disciplines with professional education in an integrated four-year program. Laboratory courses and on-the-job training form an essential part of the curriculum. Furthermore it is important to stress that Dutch colleges do not have a large component of general education in their curricula. The upper levels of general secondary education are responsible for that and therefore only students from three types of higher secondary education can study at HBO colleges.

Social Studies in the NHL definition

The Social Studies department of the NHL College of Education has designed an integrated curriculum framework called 'HBO Social Studies' which encompasses all the study programs mentioned above. HBO refers to Dutch higher professional

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education, Social Studies (the English term is also used in the Dutch title) refers to the American Social Studies tradition.

As a member of NCSS the Social Studies department of NHL has taken the 'Curriculum Standards for Social Studies; expectations of excellence' (NCSS,1994) as one of the starting points in the design of HBO Social Studies.

Implemented in the Dutch situation and taking the educational mission of the College of Education into account, the NHL uses the following definition of Social Studies:

Social Studies is the integrated study of social phenomena, based on the complete spectrum of the social sciences and the humanities. The Social Studies curriculum provides a structure for a multidisciplinary approach by the use of themes directly derived from the complex (professional) reality. The primary purpose of Social Studies is to prepare students for jobs in the educational and communicative sector embedded in a socio-cultural context. Students should be able to make informed and reasoned decisions as citizens and working professionals in a culturally diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world.

Linked to the American Social Studies tradition HBO Social Studies offers a unique perspective, which may enrich the Social Studies network around the world.
Compared with Social Studies elsewhere the following key features stand out.
HBO Social Studies:

- *not only includes regular teacher training programs in the social sciences area, but also general and applied programs in the field of the social sciences and the humanities. The Social Studies curriculum forms the framework for all these programs;*
- *takes the NCSS Curriculum Standards as one of the starting points, of course with the restriction that these standards have to be implemented in the Dutch situation and on the level of higher education;*
- *has integration as a key issue by using themes and interdisciplinary courses, which is pretty unique for an institution of higher education;*
- *offers programs that are directed at professional standards or profiles. HBO Social Studies combines the Social Studies tradition with the task of the College of Education to prepare for professions in which educational and communicative skills are related to social scientific knowledge.*
- *stands for a professional educational approach that is considered to be innovative and future oriented through the integration of the concept of 'learning how to learn' in the entire curriculum, in order to promote active and effective learning by the students. With this curriculum the NHL offers a unique program within the system of Dutch higher education as well. The Social Studies department started to renew her curriculum in this direction in 1993. It will take some more years to have the new curriculum completed, but the department is well underway.*

Key feature: learning how to learn

'Learning how to learn' forms the core concept for the design of the Social Studies curriculum and the teaching method at the Social Studies department. Students learn through that approach and develop the ability to become self-reliant learners. Systematic reflection by the students in combination with the growing ability to steer their own learning activities in different situations are paramount in the organization of the learning process by the department.

Through this concept the Social Studies department of the NHL-college hopes to reach the educational goals of NCSS for the Social Studies. In summary: Social Studies teaching and learning is powerful when it is meaningful, integrative, value-based, challenging and active.

Summary of the HBO Social Studies framework

The HBO Social Studies program can be characterized as professional and geared to the labor market (**HBO** stands for the required professionalism), is embedded in society in the broadest sense (**Social** stands for society as the subject of study) and is geared to the future in that it trains the student to adapt to ever-changing professional and societal needs (**Studies** stands for the ongoing process of personal development).

Professional (as in HBO)

- *The various streams within the HBO Social Studies program are forms of professional education directed at the educational and communicative sector of the labor market.*
- *The program equips students with a professional attitude, modern professional skills and an open mind.*
- *The complexity of the field is translated into a thematic organization of the subject matter. The themes are derived directly from phenomena from the (professional) reality.*
- *The program trains the student in skills, which are directly applicable to future work situations. The skills concern cognitive, motorial and socio-affective skills.*
- *The student may expect a balanced program suited to individual needs and individual stages of development. HBO Social Studies expects students to develop a professional attitude. The department's personell act as a role model.*

Embedded in society (as in Social)

- *Education in the department of Social Studies concerns those parts of reality, in which human behaviour and interactions between people in a socio-cultural context are taking place.*
- *The international Social Studies tradition (especially the U.S. tradition) serves as a profiling framework for the Social Studies curriculum placed in the Dutch context.*
- *The complexities of reality can be understood more profoundly by a multidisciplinary approach.*

- *Students have to be capable of placing relevant professional situations adequately in the socio-cultural context, to be able to analyse and to distinguish judgement from prejudice.*

Future-oriented (as in Studies)

- *After graduation the student has a starting competence and the ability to develop into the requirements and challenges that a professional career has to offer.*
- *The themes are derived from future professional working situations and are continuously tuned to developments in the occupational field.*
- *To prepare a student adequately for future occupational fields a problem-oriented methodology must be used. At the same time they must be taught to apply their knowledge and skills in a professional or semi-professional context.*
- *Students are trained to become increasingly self-reliant. The concept of 'learning how to learn' is the key feature here.*
- *The department offers an efficient and effective structure, with continuous and measurable quality assessment.*

In a schematic overview the structure of the HBO Social Studies curriculum shows the following. Students choose for a specific learning route within this structure and they can reconsider their choice after the first and second year.

part-time	POST-GRADUATE PROGRAMS FOR TEACHING DEGREES ON THE HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL

senior year	Specialization on vocational education or in-service business employee training	Social Studies teacher for junior high school with a light major in a specific subject area	Social Studies as an integrated field of study in the liberal arts tradition	Social Studies applied to communicative professions (e.g. Public Relations)
junior year				
sopho-more year	Culture and Society	the school as organization	Economics and Services	working in companies	Communication and Society
fresh-man year	**Culture and Society** the manifestation of norms, values and ideas in patterns of human behavior within a society	**Economics and Services** how people take care of themselves, each other and their (material) subsistence	**Communication and Society** how people exchange information in a knowledge based society	

Method of curriculum development

The HBO Social Studies curriculum comprises all the different programs mentioned above. For each separate program a method of curriculum development is applied, which was designed by the department itself.

In a number of steps the method ensures the translation of the HBO Social Studies framework to an integrated form of thematic education. This method also encompasses a step-by-step application of the concept of learning-how-to-learn.

More information

If you have taken an interest in HBO Social Studies and you want to receive more information, please let us know!

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